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| **Life and ministry of Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ**Bishop Alexander Aloysius (Alan) McGuckian SJ was born on 26 February 1953, the youngest of six children of the late Brian and Pauline McGuckian in Cloughmills, Co Antrim.Having completed primary schooling in Cloughmills and post-primary studies in Saint MacNissi’s College, Garron Tower, Bishop Alan undertook a year of First Arts in Queen’s University, Belfast, where he studied Irish and Scholastic Philosophy (1971-1972).  In October 1972 he then joined the Jesuit novitiate in Clontarf in Dublin.Bishop McGuckian is proficient in a number of modern languages and has studied an undergraduate BA in Latin and Spanish from University College Dublin (1974-1977) and later graduated with an MA in Irish Translation from QUB, Belfast.  His training for the priesthood involved the study of Philosophy in the Milltown Institute in Dublin (1977-1979) and Theology in the Toronto School of Theology specialising in the study of Scripture (M.Div and STL – 1981-1985).After his ordination to the priesthood on 22 June 1984, Father McGuckian worked as a teacher in secondary education in Clongowes Wood College SJ, Co Kildare (1984-1988).  This was followed by a six-month period of spiritual renewal in southern India and an experience of serving in a shanty town in Quezon City in the Philippines, before taking his Final Profession as a Jesuit on 15 February 1997.From 1992-2003, Father Alan served as appointed as Director of the Jesuit Communication Centre in Dublin.  During this period he was involved in setting up the websites sacredspace.ie and catholicireland.net.  Along with Mr Tony Bolger he set up Church Resources and Church Services TV.  At the same time his commitment to the Irish language led him to serve for over ten years as editor of both An Timire and Foilseacháin Ábhair Spioradálta.  Later, when already living in Belfast, he translated the autobiography of Saint Ignatius Loyola from the Spanish original into the Irish language under the title Scéal an Oilithrigh (Foilseacháin Ábhair Spioradálta).In 2011, Father Alan collaborated with Philip Orr in writing the drama 1912; one hundred years on, marking the centenary of the fateful year that saw the Home Rule Bill accepted by the House of Commons and the signing of the Ulster Covenant.In Belfast, Father Alan served as chaplain to many of the Gaelscoileanna in the Diocese of Down and Connor and was, for a few years, Chaplain in the University of Ulster at Jordanstown and Belfast.  He also served as spiritual director to the Diocesan Seminary.From 2012 to 2017, Father Alan worked closely with the Diocese of Down and Connor in the ‘Living Church’ project.  Beginning with a Listening Process in 2011 which aimed to hear the hopes and fears of the priests, religious and the lay faithful across the diocese culminating in the publication of the Living Church Report in 2012.  Father Alan was invited to set up and lead the Living Church Office to take forward the Diocesan Pastoral Plan commissioned by Bishop Noel Treanor.Father Alan was the first director of the Permanent Diaconate within the diocese.  The diocese now has sixteen serving permanent deacons, several of them married, ministering in parishes and chaplaincies across the diocese.On 9 June 2017, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Alan as Bishop of Raphoe in Co Donegal, and he was ordained Bishop on 6 August 2017 in Letterkenny.  Since this time, Bishop Alan has served in a number of responsibilities as a member of the Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference, including as a member of its Standing Committee, as the Conference’s representative to the International Commission for English in the Liturgy, as chair of the Council for Justice and Peace / NICCOSA, as a member of the Council for Pastoral Renewal and Adult Faith Development, and as liaison Bishop with Pax Christi Ireland.  |

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